

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-20 (Canceled)

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): A method of lowering the salt content of soil, said method comprising:

- a) cultivating in the soil a transgenic plant comprising a recombinant nucleic acid encoding a vacuolar Na⁺/H⁺ transporter ~~in the soil~~, wherein the recombinant nucleic acid is the nucleic acid molecule of SEQ ID NO:1 or a nucleic acid molecule encoding SEQ ID NO: 2 and the soil has an initial electrical conductivity; and
- b) harvesting the transgenic plant.

Claim 22 (Previously Presented): The method of claim 21, wherein the initial electrical conductivity of the soil is at least 20 dS/M.

Claim 23-27 (Canceled):

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): The method of claim 21, wherein the transgenic plant further comprises a second recombinant nucleic acid operably linked to the recombinant nucleic acid encoding a vacuolar Na⁺/H⁺ transporter, wherein the second recombinant nucleic acid comprises a plant promoter.

Claim 29 (Currently Amended): The method of claim 28, wherein the plant promoter is ~~[[the]]~~ a 35S promoter.

Claim 30 (Currently Amended): The method of claim 28, wherein the plant promoter is ~~[[the]]~~ a CaMV promoter.

Claim 31 (Previously Presented): The method of claim 21, wherein the transgenic plant is canola or safflower.

Claim 32 (Previously Presented): The method of claim 31, wherein the transgenic plant is canola.

Claim 33 (Previously Presented): The method of claim 31, wherein the transgenic plant is safflower.